

ADAMS COUNTY

ANNUAL OPERATING PLAN

2018



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ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 - Agreement for Cooperative Wildfire Protection in Adams County
- Attachment 2 - Adams County Mutual Aid Agreements
- Attachment 3 - Adams County Burn Restriction Levels
- Attachment 4 - Complexity Analysis Guidelines
- Attachment 5 - Adams County Communications Plan

1.0 PREAMBLE

This Annual Operating Plan (AOP) is pursuant to the “Agreement for Cooperative Wildfire Protection in Adams County” dated January 2017, also known as the State to County Agreement. (See *Attachment #1*)

This AOP is also a component of the Statewide AOP and the “Statewide Cooperative Wildland Fire and Stafford Act Agreement”. Current version of the agreement can be found on the DFPC website at:

https://gacc.nifc.gov/rmcc/dispatch_centers/r2crc/dispatch/Plans%20and%20Guides/2016%20CO%20AOP.pdf

2.0 PURPOSE

This Annual Operating Plan is applicable to all signatories and address how the signatories will implement the State to County Agreement. The County may create specific fire district AOP’s or Agreements to further define the roles and responsibilities within the County. This plan is not intended to force or suggest that any signatory operate outside of their legal authority, policies, mission or business practices. This plan outlines common approaches in wildland fire management as well as agency specific approaches.

3.0 AUTHORITIES

- Colorado Statewide Cooperative Wildland Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement Between:
 - BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT – COLORADO
Agreement Number: **BLM-MOU-CO-538**
 - NATIONAL PARK SERVICE – INTERMOUNTAIN REGION
Agreement Number: **F1249110016**
 - BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS – SOUTHWEST REGION
(no agreement number)
 - UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE – MOUNTAIN PRAIRIE REGION
(no agreement number)
 - UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOREST SERVICE – ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION
Agreement Number: **11-FI-11020000-017**
- Agreement for Cooperative Wildfire Protection in Adams County, CSFS #109 (See *Attachment #1*)

4.0 RECITALS

National Response Framework activities will be accomplished utilizing established dispatch coordination concepts. Situation and damage assessment information will be transmitted through established fire suppression intelligence channels.

Jurisdictional agencies are responsible for all planning documents (i.e., land use, fire management plans, mitigation plans) for a unit's wildland fire and fuels management program.

Protecting Agencies implement the actions documented and directed by the planning documents for initial and extended attack on wildland fires. They provide the supervision and support including operational oversight, direction and logistical support to incident management teams.

5.0 INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

5.1 Interagency Dispatch Centers

The designated Interagency Dispatch Center for the Adams County area is, Fort Collins Interagency Dispatch Center (FTC). (970) 295-6800.

Assistance by the Division of Fire Protection & Control (DFPC) Fire Management Officer (FMO) or by the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (DHSEM) Regional Field Manager (RFM) must be requested through the State of Colorado Emergency Operations Line: (303) 279-8855.

5.2 Interagency Resources

The Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge (CO-RMR), managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is located within Adams County. The CO-RMR falls within the South Adams Fire Protection District (SAFPD). SAFPD is the jurisdictional agency currently for fire suppression on the CO-RMR property. Interagency resources must be requested through the Fort Collins Interagency Dispatch Center.

DFPC does not have initial attack responsibility within Adams County. However, DFPC may provide state resource, such as crews, State Staffed engines, and aircraft under either mutual aid or reimbursable conditions. The availability of state resources for firefighting will vary and is not guaranteed. Reimbursement under the Colorado Wildfire Emergency Response Fund (WERF) is subject to availability of WERF funds. Crews and Aviation resources have additional costs associated with them that will not be reimbursed under WERF such as vehicles, fuels truck, lead planes, etc. Current version of the guide and forms can be found on the DFPC website at:

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dfpc/wildland-rules>

All requests for the VLAT (Very Large Air Tanker) through WERF must first be approved by the DFPC Branch Chief of Operations or designee.

Requests for resources / assistance under the State of Colorado's Resource Mobilization Annex must be made initially through the State of Colorado Emergency Operations Line at (303) 279-8855 by the Adams County Emergency Manager, Sheriff, or Board of County Commissioners. A DFPC FMO, DHSEM RFM, or designee will respond to this request. Current version of the Annex and associated forms can be found on the DHSEM website at:

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dhsem/resource-mobilization>

Requests for Adams County Governmental Resources shall be made through the Adams County Communications Centers (ADCOM911 or through the Adams County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), if activated.

5.3 Standards

Signatory agencies to this plan will operate under the concepts defined in the Department of Homeland Security's National Incident Management System (NIMS) and National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) guidance.

The agency having jurisdiction has the overall responsibility for that incident. Under State statute, the County and the State may enter into an agreement for the State to take management responsibility.

The standard for wildland fire training and qualifications within Colorado is the NWCG 310-1. State employees engaged in firefighting activities will meet the current NWCG qualification standards.

Signatories to this plan may not obligate nor encumber the finances of the other without express written permission.

6.0 PREPAREDNESS

6.1 Protection Planning

DFPC – Operates in the role of ESF4 at the State level as outlined in the Colorado Emergency Operating Plan.

DFPC – Develops a Colorado State Preparedness Plan annually.

DFPC – Maintains Cooperative Resource Rate Forms (CRRF), provides Cooperator access to the Incident Qualification System (IQS) and the Resource Ordering and Status System (ROSS).

DFPC – Maintains Cooperative Wildfire Agreements with each County.

DFPC – Assists with provision of wildland fire training to Counties and Cooperating Agencies.

DFPC – Administers grants specific to wildland fire suppression.

DFPC, County and USFWS – Update the AOP each year.

County – Provides for wildland fire suppression planning.

County – Enters into agreements and AOP's with local fire districts as needed.

County – Assists with the maintenance of records in ROSS and WebEOC.

County – Responsible for the coordination of efforts to suppress wildfires in unincorporated areas of the county that exceed the capabilities of the local fire protection district.

USFWS -Provides for wildland fire suppression.

USFWS - Cooperate locally in wildland fire suppression training.

USFWS – Enters into agreement with local cooperating agencies as needed.

USFWS – Maintain records in ROSS and IQCS.

6.2 Protection Areas and Boundaries

The area described by this plan includes all lands within the boundaries of Adams County, including incorporated cities and towns and federal property (USFWS). A current map of fire protection district boundaries and response zones will be kept in all Communication Centers that provide dispatch services for Adams County emergency responders, Adams County OEM/EOC, and the Adams County Sheriff's Office. Current version of the Adams County Fire District map can be found on the Adams County website at:

http://www.adcogov.org/sites/default/files/Fire_Districts_18x44.pdf

6.3 Methods of Fire Protection and Suppression

Adams County has several Fire Protection Districts that provide response to all areas of the county. The County does not maintain a regular firefighting force, but has the ability to provide heavy equipment, such as road graders and bulldozers, in support of suppression efforts.

Surrounding Counties have a similar capacity and often provide mutual aid resources to fires within the county.

6.3.1 Reciprocal (Mutual Aid) Fire Assistance

Mutual aid is defined as assistance provided by an Assisting Agency at no cost to the Jurisdictional Agency. Assisting Agencies will, upon request (or voluntarily) take initial attack action in support of the Jurisdictional Agency. It shall be the responsibility of the Agency performing initial attack to notify the Jurisdictional Agency if their lands are involved or threatened. The Jurisdictional Agency will not be required to reimburse the Assisting Agency for costs incurred for the duration of the mutual aid period, unless other arrangements are agreed upon per C.R.S. sections 29-5-105 through 29-5-110.

Mutual Aid Period: For all fires occurring on lands in Adams County, each Agency will assume responsibility for its own expenses during the first 12 hours unless otherwise agreed upon by the Jurisdictional Agency. The normal mutual aid period within Adams County will be 12 hours from the time of initial dispatch of the incident or report of the fire to a dispatch center. Assisting Agencies may opt to extend mutual aid on a case by case basis after the initial 12 hour period. This agreement should be documented by the Incident Commander. Additionally, the mutual aid period may be ended early by the requesting agency if that will help fulfill the needs of the incident. After the end of the mutual aid period, outside agencies may be eligible for the reimbursement of operational costs from the Jurisdictional Agency.

Obligation: It is understood that no Assisting Agency will be required to assist, or be expected to commit resources to a Jurisdictional Agency which may jeopardize the protection of lands of the Assisting Agency. (*See Attachment #2*)

6.3.2 Acquisition of Services

Signatories to this plan agree to utilize established ordering procedures for the acquisition of services during a wildland fire. This may include ordering resources through Local Dispatch Centers, Local EOC's, County EOC's, the Interagency Dispatch System, or the State EOC.

In some cases, services may be acquired locally. In such instances, the County will be responsible for the acquisition and establishment of vendor financial documents. If ordered at the request of the State, the County may be reimbursed for the cost of the services provided.

6.4 Joint Projects and Project Plans

Nothing in this plan shall prohibit agencies from entering into joint project agreements. There are no joint project plans within Adams County currently for this plan cycle.

Standard project planning and written agreements will be utilized when entering into joint projects.

6.5 Fire Prevention

Education efforts will be coordinated with partner agencies. Each cooperating agency may release fire danger information as deemed necessary to enhance public awareness and safety with regard to the current fire conditions. News releases will be coordinated between cooperators to lend a unified approach to the current conditions when periods of High to Extreme fire danger or when red flag warnings are issued.

6.6 Public Use Restrictions

The purpose of fire restrictions and closures is to reduce the risk of human-caused fires during high fire danger and/or burning conditions, and for the protection of human life and property. Fire restrictions and closures are invoked on federal, state, county, and private lands under federal and state laws. Public information about restrictions must be broad-based, clear and coordinated.

When contemplating a closure to open burning or lifting of fire bans, all agencies and/or fire departments/districts will advise its cooperators of the situation and consider joint action(s) as needed.

The intent of this section is not to restrict the authority of individual land management agencies from independently placing timely restrictions or bans deemed necessary.

In the case of any restrictions on burning or public movements because of extreme fire danger, either by Governor's proclamation or by local issue, the County Sheriff will be responsible for enforcement on all non-federal lands, and may assist on other lands at the request of the appropriate agency. (See Appendix #3 – Burn Restrictions)

6.7 Burning Permits

Local fire departments / districts may require burn permits. Agricultural and ditch burns are exempt from permitting under state rules.

6.8 Prescribed Fire (Planned Ignitions) and Fuels Management

Senate Bill 13-083 directed the Division to implement a prescribed burn program in Colorado, including creating minimum standards for conducting prescribed burns on any area in the state, except for prescribed burning conducted by an agency of the federal government, pursuant to Section 24-33.5-1217. To be exempt from these standards, other users of prescribed fire, including local governments and non-governmental organizations must adopt or have already adopted guidelines or standards that are in substantial compliance with the intent of section 24-33.5-1217.5 for prescribed burning under their control.

Agricultural and ditch burning are exempt from these state rules.

Signatory agencies to this plan agree to abide by current laws, rules and standards when performing prescribed fire activities. The agencies may assist each other in all aspects of prescribed fire projects.

6.9 Smoke Management

The Colorado Air Pollution Prevention and Control Act (CRS 25-7-102) requires every prescribed fire project to have a smoke permit. Due to changes in policy, procedures, technology and State air quality standards, the smoke permitting process is subject to change. For the most up-to-date process and policy refer to the Colorado Department of

Public Health and Environment, Air Pollution Control Division (CDPHE-APCD) website at:
<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/categories/services-and-information/environment/air-quality/outdoor-burning>

Agricultural and ditch burning are exempt from these state rules.

7.0 OPERATIONS

7.1 Fire Notifications

The appropriate Communication Center will receive notification of a wildland fire and will dispatch the appropriate resources per policy. Whenever possible, the closest resource should be dispatched regardless of jurisdiction.

7.2 Boundary Line Fires

When a boundary line fire occurs; either fire district or county boundaries; the first arriving unit will establish command. Jurisdictional authority will be established after firefighter and public safety have been ensured.

7.3 Response to Wildland Fire

Fires within Adams County will initially be managed by the Fire District / Fire Department having jurisdictional authority. If the fire escapes during initial attack, and, the fire becomes beyond the ability of the local district to suppress; the fire may be transitioned to the county for management with management with concurrence of the Fire Chief (or his/her designee) and the County Sheriff (or his/her designee).

If the fire is beyond the ability of the county to manage, it may transition to the state for management, in part or as a whole, with the concurrence of the County Sheriff (or his/her designee) and a DFPC FMO.

All agencies within Adams County will utilize the Incident Command System for wildland firefighting operations.

Agencies responding to fires within their own jurisdiction may follow their policies on qualifications and personal protective equipment. Agencies responding outside of the county in response to a fire managed by the State or Federal Government will comply with current interagency standards on qualifications and personal protective equipment.

7.3.1 Special Management Considerations

Repair of impacts caused by fire suppression action is normally conducted during suppression operations and is covered by a cost-share agreement, if one is in place.

7.3.2 Decision Process

When a fire is transitioned from County to State management, DFPC requires that the management decision process for the transition be documented. (See *Attachment #4*)

7.3.3 Cooperation

All of the fire protection districts within Adams County have current mutual aid agreements in place and agree to cooperate to the extent possible to bring rapid stabilization of wildland fires occurring in, near, and around Adams County. (See *Attachment #2*.)

The County and the State agree to cooperate to the extent possible to plan for and respond to fire incidents within the county.

7.3.4 Communication

All parties agree that a common communications plan is essential during a wildland fire event. As such, a common “Command” talk group will be established that all responders can operate on, and that can be monitored by the appropriate Communication Center.

Separate “Tactical” talk groups should be established for each division of the fire. These need to be accessible to all responders assigned to that division as well as the Incident Commander. (See *Attachment #5*)

To accomplish this, a radio “bridge” may be required to join un-like radios together.

7.4 Cost efficiency

It is a goal of Adams County and the State of Colorado to provide cost efficient services. Agency administrators will make every effort to ensure cost effectiveness during firefighting operations. However, cost efficiencies will not take priority over firefighter or public safety. Additionally, the potential long term financial impacts of the fire should be considered and balanced against the short term costs savings of not ordering needed resources.

7.5 Delegation of Authority

A written delegation of authority will be generated whenever an agency, other than the authority having jurisdiction, will take over the management of a fire. A delegation of authority may also be made to the incident commander and the incident command team.

The delegation does not absolve the authority having jurisdiction from any legally owed responsibility. It does however; provide another agency or individual, the authority and power to act on behalf of the agency delegating the authority. It also lists the parameters of the delegated authority.

A delegation of authority should include the following items;

- Authority having jurisdiction who is delegating authority
- Agency or individual accepting authority
- Specific authorities delegated
- Specific limits to the authority
- End terms of the authority.

7.6 Preservation of Evidence

All parties agree to participate, to the extent legally possible, to assist each other in the investigational process. This includes the preservation of evidence.

The State requires that any fire for which DFPC has assumed responsibility, the County Sheriff shall conduct an investigation into the cause of said fire. All of the investigational materials will be made available to DFPC to include evidence, notes, interviews, and the final investigation package. DFPC will not directly be responsible for criminal prosecution. This remains the responsibility of the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction.

8.0 STATE EMERGENCY FIRE FUND (EFF)

Adams County is not a participant in the Emergency Fire Fund.

9.0 USE AND REIMBURSEMENT OF INTERAGENCY FIRE RESOURCES

9.1 Cost Share Agreement (Cost Share Methodologies)

For fires that have shared financial responsibility, a cost share agreement will be produced. While each fire will be evaluated differently and may require different cost share methodologies, the basic premise for a cost share agreement is to create one that is fair and balanced for all parties.

A standard method for creating a cost share agreement is one where the total acres burned are calculated and then the percentage of acres burned within each jurisdiction are calculated. These percentages are then used for the final cost calculations for each agency.

Example: The fire burned 1000 acres. 500 acres in district A and 500 acres in district B. This equates to an even 50% split. The total cost would be split 50/50 with both agencies. Exemptions can be made for high cost items such as aircraft that may have only been utilized in one jurisdiction.

For fires where the State has taken management/financial responsibilities, the County will maintain a reasonable minimum commitment as part of a cost share methodology. The minimum commitment will be documented and will be on an incident by incident basis.

The County commitment can be resources such as heavy equipment, law enforcement, incident command personnel, or facilities and logistical needs

9.2 Training

The Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC) will serve as the representative to the Fort Collins Interagency Dispatch Zone Training Committee. This Training Committee uses input from all agencies with wildland fire responsibilities including the County, Fire Protection Districts, and Volunteer Fire Departments to determine the training needs for the zone.

DFPC has the ability to assist with the provision of wildland fire training within the county. DFPC will assist agencies as available with requested trainings. With the exception of custom courses designed for specific objectives, all training provided by DFPC will follow the current National Wildfire Coordinating Group standards as outlined in PMS 901-1 "Field Managers Course Guide". The costs for these courses will be negotiated on a case by case basis.

9.3 Communication Systems

For the purposes of conducting business authorized by this plan, all parties to this operating plan agree that assisting agencies may use the jurisdictional agency's radio frequencies as needed to conduct emergency communications on fires of the jurisdictional agency. No party to this operating plan will use, or authorize others to use, another agency's radio frequencies for routine day to day operations.

Adams County currently utilizes a number of 700 MHz and 800 MHz radio systems including the state 800 MHz Digital Trunked Radio System for its daily operations. A State Mutual Aid Channel (MAC) may be assigned by dispatch for out of area resources responding within the county.

Resources from outside of Colorado do not have the ability to operate on the FRCC (Front Range Communication Consortium) or Colorado RS radio systems. As such, when out of state resources enter Adams County they will be assigned an appropriate talk group according to the IAP and communication plan of the specific incident. Nebraska specific resources will utilize VFIRE (VHF) frequencies that can be "bridged" by the appropriate Communication Center.

VHF radio frequencies may be needed for certain aviation resources. Generally, the VFIRE frequencies may be available for this purpose.

9.4 Fire Weather Systems

Information on Fire Weather Stations, Fire Danger, Current Fire Situation, Current Fire Restrictions, and other information can be seen at the FTC website:

http://gacc.nifc.gov/rmcc/dispatch_centers/r2ftc/

Red Flag/Fire Weather Announcements - The National Weather Service in Boulder and Goodland periodically issues "FIRE WEATHER" watch and "RED FLAG" warning bulletins. Fire Weather Forecast information can be seen at the National Weather Service's Fire Weather Index Page:

<http://www.crh.noaa.gov/bou/awebphp/fireindx.php>

9.5 Aviation Operations

County and the Fire Districts within the county may contract with local aviation resources for fire suppression. The benefiting agency will be responsible for establishing ordering, use, and reimbursement guidelines for the utilization of said aircraft.

Other firefighting aircraft may be ordered through the Fort Collins Interagency Dispatch Center (FTC). The benefiting/requesting agency may be wholly responsible for any and all costs associated with such resources.

Fire Protection Districts operating within their legally defined borders, may order aircraft as needed without prior approval of county or state officials. Orders for aircraft will first be sent to the appropriate Communication Center, who will then contact Fort Collins Interagency Dispatch. The Fire District will be responsible for any and all costs associated with the ordering of aircraft for a fire.

Aircraft ordered from Fort Collins Interagency Dispatch will operate on VHF radio frequencies and not the DTRS. The incident MUST have VHF communications in place when ordering aircraft. The VFIRE frequencies are available for use for this purpose. Aircraft that cannot communicate with ground forces will not engage in suppression operations.

The DFPC sponsors a State of Colorado Aviation Program, including fixed wing and rotor wing assets, for use on wildland fires within the State of Colorado. These assets have home bases, but frequently move locations to preposition in areas of risk. Requests to have State of Colorado aviation assets moved to cover a specific area (such as Adams County) should be made by local cooperators through the DFPC Regional FMO. Requests on wildfires for all state aviation resources, except the Multi-Mission Aircraft will be made through FTC Dispatch”.

To request a DFPC MMA, contact the State Emergency Operations Line at (303) 279-8855. Request to order the DFPC MMA and also to speak to the DFPC Duty Officer. The key is to call early as possible.

See current procedures and request form at:

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dfpc/request-mma>

National Guard helicopters with water buckets may be available for use. These resources should only be ordered after Interagency advised they cannot fill the request and then they MUST be ordered through the State EOC's process and may take several hours to mobilize. These resources will utilize VHF radios for communications. The benefiting/requesting agency may be wholly responsible for any and all costs associated with National Guard resources.

The following information will be included in the aircraft request:

- ✓ Incident Name
- ✓ Location (legal description and/or latitude and longitude)
- ✓ Jurisdiction
- ✓ Air Contact with air to air radio frequency
- ✓ Ground Contact with air to ground radio frequency
- ✓ any other aircraft in the area
- ✓ Weather conditions on the fire

- ✓ Recommended aviation frequencies
- ✓ Values at risk

9.6 Billing Procedures

The procedure for reimbursement through DFPC will occur via the Cooperative Resource Rate Form (CRRF). Billing may be made for equipment and/or personnel listed on the CRRF with the corresponding documentation. Current procedures and forms can found at the DFPC website at: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dfpc/wildland-fire-billing>.

9.7 Cost Recovery

Both the County and the State reserve the right to pursue reasonable cost recovery efforts for equipment, personnel, and supplies utilized in response to a wildland fire that extends beyond the mutual aid period. This includes the facilities and administrative fee, also known as indirect rate. This includes pursuing legal action against any party determined to be responsible for the cause of the fire.

10.0 GENERAL PROVISIONS

This AOP is the framework for cooperation between the State and the County. It does not supersede any other lawful policy, rule, or procedure. This AOP may be utilized as part of the Counties master emergency operations plan. The County is encouraged to create AOP's, MOU's and Agreements with their local response agencies.

10.1 Personnel Policy

Each agency agrees to follow its own personnel policy and procedures. All government employees shall be employed at their regular salary rate. All non-government employees will be paid at agency department rates. If no agency department rates have been set, then DFPC established rates will be used. These can be found at the DFPC website at:

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dfpc/wildland-fire-billing>

10.2 Modification

Changes may be made to this plan at any time during the plan cycle as needed. These changes must have the concurrence of all parties before being placed into the plan document.

10.3 Annual Review

This plan requires annual review and will require re-authorization by all parties prior to April 1 of each year.

10.4 Duration of Plan

This plan is to be considered in full effect upon the date of the signatures. This plan will remain in effect until rescinded by the parties, or until [April 1, 2019](#), whichever occurs first.

10.5 Previous Plans Superseded

Any and all previously dated Annual Operating Plans pertaining to wildland fire within Adams County are hereby null and void upon the date of the signatures on this current plan.

11.0 SIGNATURES

Authorized Representatives

ADAMS COUNTY SIGNATURES

Signature

Date

Michael McIntosh
Printed Name

County Sheriff
Title

Signature

Date

Mary Hodges
Printed Name

County Commissioner
Title

COLORADO DIVISION OF FIRE PREVENTION & CONTROL SIGNATURE

Signature

Date

Dan Escobedo
Printed Name

DFPC Regional Fire Management Officer
Title

FEDERAL LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY SIGNATURES

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Signature

Date

David Lucas
Printed Name

Project Leader; Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR
Title